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VE BERMUDA



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AVE, BERMUDA!

PEGRAM DARGAN

"Many a green isle needs must be"

—*Shelley.*

THE L. GRAHAM CO., LTD.
NEW ORLEANS
1913

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AVE, BERMUDA!

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE following pieces, with the exception of the last, were composed during a recent brief visit by the author to the Bermuda Islands.

The news of the foundering of the "Titanic" having been received on board ship during the return voyage to this port, the concluding poem is, with this excuse, appended to the collection.

New York, 1912.

TO

I SAW them yesternight,
In jewels round thee shine,
The proud, the vain—and might
Have wished them thine;

But on thy breast, instead,
One bloom of breath divine
Did deign to rest its head,
Where oft had rested mine;

And paled each jewel fair,
As 'fore the eye of Him;
For love had laid it there,
And lustre could not dim!

The world I do not own,
To lay before thy feet:
In these frail lines alone—
Behold my wealth complete!

With lordlier gifts abounding,
Such some might deem but poor;
But, if the rest compounding,
One lily make them more,

In it my soul I breathe—
And offer thee;
And, smiling, thou wilt wreathe
The laurels best for me!

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AVE, BERMUDA!

AVE, BERMUDA!

"*AVE, BERMUDA!*" sang I when
First my eye delighted gazed
On thy shore, which to my ken
Seemed Elysium: all amazed,
"*Ave, Bermuda!*" sang I then;

"*Ave, Bermuda!*" sing I still,
Now that I have known thee better,
Breathed thy balm of vale and hill:
Now, for many a joy the debtor,
"*Ave, Bermuda!*" sing I will;

"*Ave, Bermuda!*" sing I shall,
When the sun for me is sinking,
Far or near, by wave or wall;
Still, of thy bright bowers thinking,
"*Ave, Bermuda!*"—sing it, all.

AVE, BERMUDA!

TO THE RUBBER TREE

FAIR Tree! whose sweet benignant shade,
So freely given one and all,
Whom Ocean's heavy hand hath made
Content about thy base to fall;

Or when Sol's ever-journeying team
Too near our little world hath driven,
Or touched us with too keen a beam,
Although that beam be shot from heaven,

We seek the rest thy boughs supply,
As birdlings in a mother's nest,
While by the Hours as lightly fly
As fell the feathers from out her breast:

No flowers are thine, of gay or bright,
But what at distance flowers had been
Unto the eye, if seen aright,
Are leaves still folded, not yet seen.

AVE, BERMUDA!

Emblem of thrift in mercies spent!
 Thy all is but to shelter all,
And spend the talent to thee lent,
 Till He who gave it both shall call:

Oh! could my days be spent like thine,
 So sweetly by so soft a wave,
So richly 'neath such sky divine,
 Still giving all that Heaven gave,

I could not wish a fate more fair,
 Nor dream a doom more sweet for me,
Than spreading arms thus in the air,
 And giving comfort like a tree!

How different, child of storms, am I!
 And bound and bent to wander far;
Yet still at times, fair Tree, I'll lie
 In fancy 'neath thy boughs—which are

To me that tent my tribe of old
 Extended on the desert hath:
Their home—the all they knew or told,
 In some oasis in their path!

AVE, BERMUDA!

ON A SUN-DIAL, PEMBROKE CHURCHARD

STEAL softly, Time! thy foot is near
What all must feel; yes, even thou
At last must to this silence bow—
For whom what eye will drop a tear?

The hours doth this dial mark
Are naught to them that sleep below;
But to the passer this will show
How fast he hasteth—let him hark!

Steal softly, Time!—even as I speak
The shadow changes on the disc:
Shall I another moment risk,
Without amends?—go in and seek!

AVE, BERMUDA!

THE CEDAR-WORKER

THRO' bark and bole he gropes his way,
To find his soul that lies beneath it:
(So doth the poet with his lay,
So doth the potter with his clay),
While all the while a song goes with it.

As resurrection moving death,
The magic of his cunning thrives;
Till, livlier growing at each breath,
At last the dead thing lives!

And, lo! before your eye appears
A god, or goddess—choose you which?
You smile and pass, I pause (who errs?)
And, what within his heart he bears,
I bear off, stranger, to a niche!

AVE, BERMUDA!

THE PORKER'S FIRST POST FROM BERMUDA

A GARDEN of Eden—without a garden!
Save for some Adam's sole consumption;
Where Nature smiles, but, by your pardon,
Smiles at Starvation's lack of gumption!

The air's divine, the water's blue,
Nor fairer spot in all creation;
But what is that to me or you,
Who starve, or live on expectation?

A Holland fen, a land of Goshen,
Were really better for a mortal;
And, at this time, more to my notion,
Than this fair Isle, tho' Heaven's portal!

Moore has some lines about here dying,
Far more appropriate than much more
He warbles, when to Nea sighing,
Like skylark on his blasted shore!

AVE, BERMUDA!

The land-lord says that I look better:
(You know what land-lords' words are worth)
But here's the post—and so my letter,
Goes—(wish I too went with it)—North!

AVE, BERMUDA!

ON SEEING MISS SWIM

NEVER Nereid ever swam
Thro' the blue deep like you can:
Who in grace quite shame the swan,
Or another goose I am!

So Diana thro' the sky,
So a songster cuts the blue;
But a rara avis, you,
Can a heart cleave thro' the eye!

Come on shore, or I must go
To my grave in yonder deep!
But on shore, nor rest, nor sleep,
Till I've heard it, "Yes" or "No"!

By each wave in yonder sea!
By each sand upon the shore!
All my days I will adore;
All my sighs I give to thee!

AVE, BERMUDA!

THE ISLANDERS.

I MET a fellow swearing that it cost him "very dear,"
No matter where he went, and he was going everywhere;
The sea had made him sick, but his "women" made him sicker;
Some people thought him "thick," but he knew that they were thicker;
But he couldn't count the money and he couldn't count the "cost,"—
Some fools might call it "Heaven," but he knew that he was "lost!"
With a sixpence for his liquor and a shilling every turn,
But he'd be turning homeward by to-morrow:

Never more to roam—
Going home to-morrow,
Never more to roam!

Now your porker quits his "diggings" in a frozen western town,

AVE, BERMUDA!

Bringing half his luggage gaping for the things that he'd "salt down,"
And who thinks to own the Islands for a song or for a sou,
And to modernize the methods, show the natives what to do,
O that porker'll get some knowledge, he 'll remember very well;
Yes, he'll surely go to college, (which he may mistake for Hell!)
But he'll surely get some knowledge, yes, a thing or two he'll learn
Ere he is turning homeward on to-morrow!

Never more a porker,
He has been to college!
O that porker'll get some knowledge,
By to-morrow!

For your native born Isländer may not be an Alexánder,
Or a Bonaparté packer from the West,
He may've never crossed the ocean, he may have but a faint notion
Of what's modern, of what's better, and what's best:
If the band should play "My Country!" he woud take it for his "King,"

AVE, BERMUDA!

And till Yankee Doodle comes to town he never knows a thing;
But the porker, who it knows, and would lead him by the nose—
O that porker's going homeward by to-morrow:

Never more to roam,—
Got enough o' traveling!
Going home to-morrow—
Never more to roam!

For, your native born Isländer may not be an Alexánder,
But a porker cannot lead him by the nose!

AVE, BERMUDA!

ON ABLUTIONS IN BERMUDA

FAIR Florence divine, a real nightingale seemed
As she sang to the soldier's rude pillow,
Had a plan—it was fine, or so it was deemed:
When removed from the fount or the billow,

In her fair hand extended, as she highly commended,
A goblet she offered each daughter;
And from that glass she would make each fair novice there take,
Not a drink, but—a bath of cold water!

Should the Nightingale here once chance to appear,—
And she might, for bright wings she must own,
It appears so to me, and I think you'll agree,
That she'd have us all bathe from—a spoon!

AVE, BERMUDA!

ON PERUSING A CERTAIN LATE VOLUME OF VERSES

LIKE the century plant, that a century consumes
In preparing to bud, and not much when it blooms:
So laboured thy rhymes, and so dense is thy sense,
We sigh at the waste, and we damn the expense.

ON SEEING A DOVE, ON A RAMBLE

IF a dove did actually pilot Tom Moore
To the bank where his Nea reclined,
And the same sort of bird the olive bore Noah,—
Which a dove has just brought to my mind:

If the first found his love and the latter a world:
Then what, in the world, does it mean,
That a far fairer pinion than either unfurled
On this most unlucky day I have seen?

AVE, BERMUDA!

ON "LALLA ROOKH"

WHAT a name—*"Lalla Rookh!"*
'Twould sell any book,—
Even Markham being thereof the author;
But the difference, Moore's Peri
Entered Heaven when weary,
While the former's must have stayed with his father!

DIRECTIONS FOR A PATCH

AS the cloud on the cheek of the heavenly Luna,
Is that patch that makes Joan to resemble great Juno;
But, for heaven's sake, "Madam," don't so far mistake it,
As as big as the moon or to think it or make it!
Cut it round like an orange, or square it, or star it,
But never a heart, or, by Vulcan, you mar it!
For a heart on the cheek is a heart on the sleeve:
It may bring in the jackdaws, but the doves will it leave.

AVE, BERMUDA!

THE EXCUSE

THINK not, for this,
That I would miss
One kiss from those delightful lips,
Tho' greater danger,
Than to stranger
Appears to toss his side or ship's,
Did wait without:
And thereabout
A frowning sire, or a mastiff:
I'd dare the worst,
The father, curst;
And, Cerebus, I would have past, if

Thy hundred mouths,
Thy master's oaths,
Roared all at once and all they can;
But worse than these—
"What was it, please?"
O, only this—another man!

AVE, BERMUDA!

REPLY TO A GOSSIP

O TELL me not,
No, tell me not,
That she is false—she's never been it!
'Twere sooner true
That truth in you
Would be, where I have never seen it.

Off with thy tales—
It naught avails:
If Truth herself to me should come,
And it declare,
And truth it were,
I would receive it, how?—why, dumb.

Then tell me not,
O, tell me not!
She's false—as such I will receive it!
But, if she said,
That you were led
By goodness only—I'd believe it!

AVE, BERMUDA!

IMPROMPTU ON MOORE'S CALABASH TREE

FOR him seeks distinction, or would hang up his name,
This precept we have from a bard of much fame:
On a bough hang your "handle," and it clearly is seen,
That that "handle" must shine while that bough remains
green.

Thus the Lakers, the lakes, and lord Byron the ocean,
But a calabash tree keeps Moore here in motion.

Yet 'tis pleasant, when sitting in such a fair spot,
And drinking to Moore in a calabash pot,
To think—who can help it?—that quite even's the score:
What's a calabash tree without a Tom Moore?

LINES IN AN ALBUM

WHEN I took up this pen and imbrued it with ink,
And thought I'll not spoil a page quite so pretty;
So set me to think—if ever I did think!
Why, I couldn't think at all—what a shame and a pity,
But the reason was plain; and so plainly I told her:
She was stealing my senses from over my shoulder!

AVE, BERMUDA!

IMPROMPTU ON A PAUSE IN CONVERSATION

WERE you a fair bark of the ocean, my dear,
And I a wave in your wake,
I know you might well have no notion, my dear,
Of the side that that billow would take;

Or were I a sweet-tooth wandering,
And you were a blossom outright,
You might never discover, by pondering,
Just when, or on what, I would light;

Or were I a Peep-Tommy of heaven,
And you a real cloud floating there,
To that star, I know, was ne'er given
To know what that fair Cloud would wear;

But when you hold the bow of Cupid, my love,
And I have hold of the string,
What's to be thought of marksmen so stupid, by Jove!
They can't "hit on" a blessed thing?

AVE, BERMUDA!

IGNORANCE: A FACT

'NEATH a palm that expanded his grean hands to Heaven,
As in thanks for the place that that Heaven had given,
A lady delighted, by me there invited,
Thus warbled a ditty one eve:
"Under the bamboo tree,
Who loves to lie with me?"

When what think you resulted?
That palm, quite insulted,
So heavily at it did grieve,
That soon thereafter—
(Spare, heartless, your laughter)
That palm tree withered away!

The moral to find,
For those have a mind,
It is this (and remember it, pray!)
That the rule of the mode is to slubber each name,
That we don't understand, and with trees 'tis the same.

AVE, BERMUDA!

CAUTIONING A LADY NOT TO RISK HERSELF TOO FAR OUT ON THE CLIFFS OF THE NORTH SHORE

BESIDE these still waters, you so much admire,
(So by moonlight her daughters, caught from dam or from sire,
Still sing, as they sit in their Paradise bowers,
While like owlets by flit the heavy-winged Hours:
In these Isles lived a bard—(none has taken his place:
A statement quite hard, yet still such is the case.)
Now this bard, to delight him, full often would roam,
Tho' the Tempest might frighten all wiser ones home;
On these cliffs he would stalk, tho' the breakers might roar,
To the tempest he'd talk, and the louder the more;
But one night, as he stood—(no doubt it was near
Where you seem as you would step out to it there!)
Well, one night, as his hair wildly swung in the breeze—
(It was there—it was there!—O a little back, please!)
Well, to end with my story, that the rest we may join—
The bard fell to glory, the proud cliff to ruin!
So when—do not do it!—you would venture too far,
Pray, remember that poet and that cliff, and beware!

AVE, BERMUDA!

TO SOME LADIES: A RIGMAROLE ON "CHANGE"

YES, "change" is everywhere,
And old gives way to new,
And foul to-day to-morrow fair,
And black to-day then blue.

That sylph, o'er slimness souring,
Next season smiles to see
Some stouter nymph wall-flowering
Where she was wont to be;

That hair, that vexed Diana,
Some defter wears to-day,
And wins where Di' had ran a
Successless race away;

That pin, that pinned a flounce, or
A frill, in the wrong way,
Another with an ounce or
Grain, more of sense makes pay;

AVE, BERMUDA!

That pen, which Van abuses,
(As Crabbe's to Moore descended)
Some future genius uses
For what it was intended!

The pill, that Quackitt rolled us,
Some god, for pity's sake,
Has changed from where he told us—
And Quackitt smiles to take!

That bottle, we were draining
In hopes to keep us stout,
In bits, some high wall gaining—
We see to keep us out!

That lass, that we now toast as
The only fond and true,
(Since what unchanged we boast as
We teach it to change too)

But one more glass of sand—ah!
And (what we'd held before)
Some other holds her hand—bah!
And we hold—but the door!

AVE, BERMUDA!

When, tho' the latch Love lifted,
(If latch it be supposed)
The scene again has shifted,
For Hate the door hath closed!

Thus, there are changes many,
As all will now admit;
But never yet was any
Like this—we mean to quit!

Next when you think to plague me,
With "Sing us something strange!".....
But there's the bell—Say, Maggy,
Does that, too, mean a change?

AVE, BERMUDA!

TO A LADY: INQUIRING AS TO THE AUTHOR'S METHODS OF COMPOSITION

FOR the bards transcendent, have glory
 Like M....., et ceteri, to waste,
Of them I can tell you no more, —I
 Know less than they do of taste;

But, for my own particular person,
 The bard that is blessed with thy smile,
Much study is his only aversion,
 And his study—yourself, for good style;
That, in fact, the things that I scribble
 Are but drivel of a passion-drawn mind,
As a cock that continues to dribble,
 Whence the gallons have gushed were confined.

Thus the "bravest" of "notions" are lost him,
 Ere the sable-hued tapster can catch,
In his horn; yet so little they've cost him,
 That a twopence, or penny, might match.

AVE, BERMUDA!

When I feel like a bard, I imagine,
 And might write, if my toes were foot-loose,
To but see a pen puts me a rage in,
 And an ink-pot's a mouse to my Muse!

And at night, when I lie on my pillow,
 Not thrifty like Concord's great sage,
I'm thinking far more of the willow
 Than of scratching a light or a page;

That really the world is now hymning
 Worse songs than I might it supply,
If of writing I were as fond as of swimming,
 And of glory I was fonder, or "pie."

Enough, if the trifles you praise so
 Can but please a fair critic like you;
And the laurels may go, as the days do:
 Leaving you, I will not them pursue.

AVE, BERMUDA!

IN ANSWER TO MOORE'S LINES, BEGINNING

"Sweet Moon! if like Crotona's sage"

I DO not care to write
 My thoughts on yonder moon,
That changes every night—
 They'd change too soon!

I have no notion, none,
 Of scribbling by the sea,
Where every wave, doth run
 To read, might blot out me!

To Cyrus' mountain neither,
 Where he inscribed his glory;
For fear the change of weather
 Might change the story!

To page I dare not trust it,
 I've seen a worm devour it;
And Fag would never dust it,
 Unless paid doubly for it.

AVE, BERMUDA!

In gem, I would not trust them there,
For gems how soon are lost;
And, then, in style to put them there—
Think of the cost!

In various ways have others written,
But none of these please me:
With only one sweet way I'm smitten;
Which is, please ye,

With my own lips to trace them—
Nor fear they'll thence depart,—
And what so much could grace them?
In my love's heart!

AVE, BERMUDA!

A LAMENT FOR SHELLEY

"MANY a green isle needs must be":
So he sang, who never found one;
But his music is a sea,
And it circles round one—
One and all are green to me,
Or they lose their greenery
Than in winter faster!

Ah! what voice of sprite or bird,
Or of mortal ever sang so?
Heaven above has never heard;
Earth nor sea has ever rang so,
As when late his lute he strung.—
Neptune, in thy waves is flung,
Ay me, lute and master!

AVE, BERMUDA!

THE ISLE OF DREAMS

FAIR Isle of my Dreams! how often, when fired
By the page of the poet, or by fancy inspired,
When the day-star had sunk, or at mid-night I pondered,
It was bliss by thy shores as then to have wandered!
Thy bowers I frequented, thy vales and thy hills,
Aye, each pleasing prospect this moment that thrills;
As I bathed in thy sun-light or lolled in thy shade,
Or I hailed the moon-rise, or I saw the star fade,
I breathed of thy flowers, I threaded thy caves,
Where the wildest of billows speaks peace as it laves,
And the wealth of a monarch seems cheap by the side
Of the gems that old Ocean has piled for his bride:
(Tho' he scud on the waves, he'll return to his rest
In a cavern like this, that his Thetis has dressed!)
Or, by Fancy instructed, I sought out the shore,
Where the tempest would shriek or the loud breaker roar;
Or, with Pleasure returning, I turned to thy groves,
Where the cedar never fades, and the Frost never roves;
With thy soft-eyed daughters, still melting like Eve,
Inviting to bowers, but not to deceive;
Whose eyes, tho' as mild as the beam Luna throws

AVE, BERMUDA!

When she peeps from a cloud, as thro' snow looks a rose,
Still how soon they can show that the lava's beneath,
Where the heart beats on, never frozen till death!
Whose hands, tho' as soft as the roses they twine,
Once plighted, will clasp as her bough will the vine!
 Heard thy drums, and thy cannon that speak to the wave,
The fife, and the bugle that calls up the brave;
Yes, I heard them, in fancy, replying to Jove,
In thunders below as he thundered above;
Saw thy youths, clad in scarlet, the colors of Mars,
Resplendent beneath, as above them the stars:
Aye, hailed each proud banner that flaunts in thy skies—
The fairest that floats and the freest that flies!
 And, now, in reality rise ye before me,
For the sake of my dreams, how much more I adore ye:
More beauty you have, and more meaning unto me,
For the sake of those visions that fancy then threw me,
In the days ere the winds of rude winter had chilled me,
And my heart filled with ice!—Oh! how much more you had
 thrilled me,
Had I earlier found you, and how different my fate!
Yes 'tis sweet, thus to find you, tho' never so late:
I embrace the glad chance; and I'd touch up my lute,
For thy honor awake it—Oh! let it lie mute!

AVE, BERMUDA!

For what should I utter, and how should I sing,
When my hand has no cunning, and stiff is each string.
Like the minstrel of old, I might boast of some skill;
But the way has been long, and the winds have been chill;
And the springs of my fancy, that in music had gushed—
Alas! they are frozen, and that music is hushed;
And the thoughts, that had flocked, like the birds to the bough
Where their leader had led them, they never can now;
For the hand and the string tho' Affection should urge,
Yet would Custom still turn every note to a dirge:
That in vain I'd essay, as you'd wish, as I'd like,
Tho' the theme may be new, the old cords they would strike!
And who would presume of such bowers to sing,
And know of the memories around them that cling:
Of a Waller, a Marvel, a Shakspere, a Moore,
Who have deigned to rehearse them in music before?
Oh! better to cease—best ne'er to 've begun;
For, when strains are so harsh, they're far harsher than none.
Then what need I say more?—what more need I say?
But adore them in silence! But I cannot to-day:
When I gaze on these waters, when I look on this sky,
When I taste of the breeze, that is passing me by,
So moved is my bosom, that, tho' Wisdom reprove,

AVE, BERMUDA!

The head may devise, but the lips will still move;
For the tide in my breast, like the tide, sets in;
And its way it will have, or its way it will win;
That stay it I cannot—it will not be stayed,
Till the wind of reflection, aroused it, is laid.

Aye, 'twas of such bowers in my youth that I dreamed:
Where the boughs ever blossomed, the sun ever beamed,
Yet never too coldly and never too keen,
With a veil, as from heaven, suspended between:
Like his sister elsewhere, while his sister shone there
Like a shell from the ocean, suspended in air;
Where the stars were so near, that we knew as so far,
Each seemed like a fire-fly, not like a star;
And so sweet were the buds, and so close was the sky,
We looked for those fire-flies downward to fly!

Yes, thus had I fancied, there might be a spot
Where all that I hated, or loved not, forgot,
I might take what was left, or what Fortune might give,
And the lost I'd forget, and the false I'd forgive;
With all that I treasured—to one spot confined,
And all that I did not—to another consigned;
Where all of my world would lie in the view
Of a bird on the bough, or a bird in the blue;
And nothing so distant, in all my domain,

AVE, BERMUDA!

But my hand might it reach, or my step might attain;
Where, reclining beneath my own fig tree and vine,
(Divine, if you like, just because it was mine!)
The rest I'd forget; or, if chanced to remember,
They'd seem but the snow of a far off December;
When scenting the blossom that swung at my lattice,
The world I'd surrender—and the snow-flakes quite gratis!
 But so often I'd sought them, so often unfound,
I'd begun to suspect them but visions unsound,
But the dreams of my heart, that would never come true—
Good to turn the head white, and the world to make blue.
 Now, gazing in wonder around me, I cry,
Is it truth?—Do I dream?—and lo! in the eye,
The very bird that I heard, the very rose that I knew,
When I dreamt of the bird and the rose ere it grew;
And the sea that I scan, and the sky in my ken,
Are the sea of my dreams and the sky I dreamed then;
And the sights and the sounds, that I hear that I view,
It is all—it is naught, but my dreams come true!
 Then think you in silence I will pass by the sight
Of my dreams made true? No! I will not, despite
All the sages have sung them, with wit and with art;
When each string that I strike is a string of my heart,
And each note, that I fling on the breezes, a sigh,

AVE, BERMUDA!

That to-morrow I leave them—yes, leave them to die!
To the waste and the barren again I must fare;
But a moment's respite—I will live while I'm here!
Lo! the current of years, on the instant, turns back;
For an instant, alas! but an instant, alack!
The ashes are roses, the roses how fair!
And lips that were dust, are now murmuring here:
"O, to live is how sweet, and to love we were made!
To hate is how ill, and to die is how sad!"
We listen enraptured, the springs are renewed,
And in love-drops the heart, like a rose, is bedewed.
Oh! the hands that we touch! oh! the things that we see!
To call it a dream—what a fancy 't would be!
Then like Prospero's vision, the fair castless descend;
And, of all, as he says, there is naught but the end:
"But the end!" it must come—let it come when it will!
From the bosom of steel will the tear-drop distil;
For an instant the eye is bedimmed—but no more,
And, cleared of that tear-drop, shines more than before!
Then adieu to my Dreams!—Fair Isle of the deep,
Till I breathe the last sigh, till I sleep the last sleep,
I will wish thee farewell, I will bid thee adieu:
Fair Isle of the sea, where my dreams came true!

AVE, BERMUDA!

TO SLEEP

FETCH me, Ariel, from that Isle
Taught me that I yet could smile,
To my brows and to my eyes,
Drowsy dew,
Such as in the blossom lies
Where lay you!

Swiftly!—I would be at rest:
Such a turmoil's in my breast
As the sea that thou must cross,
Posting thither;
But, tho' mountains on it toss,
Hence and hither!

But, if you with Love should meet,
On him cast the heavy sweet;
Till each pinion, all his powers,
Drowsied lie:
Cause of all my sleepless hours—
Rest will I!

AVE, BERMUDA!

TO A CREOLE GIRL

FORMED for love and formed for loving,
With a languid eye inviting,
Nothing fearing, naught reproving,
Still delighted if delighting;

Saffron cheeks and raven tresses,
With a heart that only knows
To yield kisses, to speak yesses,
Never frowns and never noes;

Soft of tongue and mild of feature,
Kind, alluring, child of love,
I have never known a creature
Fairer, by the gods above!

Would'st thou take me to that bosom,
Who naught else hast e'er denied—
As the bee goes to the blossom,
As to the rock the tide,

AVE, BERMUDA!

I would love thee, love thee ever,
 Leave thee, nor deceive thee,
Wander from thee, never, never:
 If 'tis "yes" I will believe thee.

Speak it! and, by Jove and Juno!
 I will linger but to find
In thine eyes, belle of Bermuda,
 All that I've resigned!

AVE, BERMUDA!

A RETROSPECT

WHEN I lolled in fair Bermuda,
With a damsel by my side,
I imagined blesed Buddha,
By his beaming Heavenly bride,
Could not find more to content him
Than we had in that little pent-in
Golden Island of all isles!

Not a day without a difference,
Not a wave without a thrill;
Till we often sought deliverance
In a bower sweeter still.

How we doted!
How we gloated!
Truth, sometimes the devil played;
Till I often
Thought a coffin
Of that cedar would be made!

Yet, we left it all behind us;
But we never can forget,
But a golden cord will bind us
To the little Island, set
Like an emerald in the waves,—
Where the misty ocean raves,
And the sun-god throws a moon-beam when he smiles!

THE ONE RULE

WHEN I was fond and foolish,
And she was young and gay,
There was but one sweet rule which
We did not disobey:—
'Twas kiss those hours away!

Old Herrick says to gather
The rose-buds while we may,
Ere rough and wintry weather
Takes all those buds away,
Was wise even in his day.

But, now that I grow wiser,
And she is not so gay,
How else would you advise her,
If you were forced to say,—
But kiss such hours away?

AVE, BERMUDA!

THERE MAY BE BRIGHTER SPOTS

THERE may be brighter spots,
 There may be fairer seas;
There may be happier lots
 Then we enjoy in these;

But since we do not know them,
 And since we may ne'er view them,
 We throw good wishes to them,
And that is all we owe them.

Of Greece and Rome I've heard,
 But you, fair Isles, I view:
And as that saint, that to one bird
 A thousand years did bend
 His ear unwearied, I could lend
 A thousand more to you!

There may be brighter spots
 (I'm sure the're many worse)
The sun has spots, the're blots
 And blanks in Homer's verse:

But he in one fair face
 Found all he'd hoped to gain,
To not then stay the race,
 But wander all his life,
 Forsooth, to find his—wife,
Would men suppose him sane?

Then tho' the're other seas,
 And other isles may be
Are fairer far than these—
 What's that to me?

As foolish them to seek
(Those distant Roman or the Greek)
 As that mad lover were,
 Who having her in view,
 (As I this moment you)
Should sigh,—but not to her!

Then, tho' the're other seas,
 And other isles may be
Are fairer far than these—
 That's naught to me!

AVE, BERMUDA!

THE RETURN: A PROSPECT

HITHER once I wandered
Long ago, here leaving,
(Took but what I've squandered)
All I had worth giving,
Left—a heart!

Now for it I come,
For it and a tomb:
Where the bowers bloom,
Or billows foam!

If thy store be narrow,
Death, to-day, to-morrow,
Love will lend an arrow:
Go, and of him borrow,
Aim and dart!

AVE, BERMUDA!

ON FORT "CATHERINE"

THERE'S silence on her darkened walls!
There's stillness in her guns!
Not hers to roar the farewell calls,
Or welcome to the sun's;

Still like a veteran, who yet keeps
His armor by his side,
Upon her broken lanyard sleeps,
This Amazon of the tide!

"Victoria" o'er her proudly looks,
As younger sister might,
Who, in aspiring, illy brooks
An elder sister's right;

But, as in *ton* we often view
The vainer far less fair,
So "Catherine's" charms far outdo you,
Victorious—but not here!

Thine is the glory of the morn,
But naught can hers now mar:
For thee the scoffing foe to scorn,
Her's is the peace of war!

AVE, BERMUDA!

THE TWO MURRAYS

BRING in a foaming tankard,
That might a galleon float!
Here's the *road* where Murray anchored!
Here's the *sheets* that Murray wrote!

He tossed, in doubt and error,
From Webster Point to Johnson's,
And he is tossed, in terror,
On ocean's utter nonsense:

How gladly one man finds
Surcease to his sea-sorrows;
The other for his mind's
Repose from Murray borrows.

Then here's where Murray anchored,
And here's where Murray wrote:
Fetch in a brim-full tankard—
We'll drink, and then we'll quote!

AVE, BERMUDA!

EX LIBRIS LIBER

MY friend Frith has this, uncommon,
In modern days to be a Roman:
Shamed of his heart, he seldom shows it,
And is polite—when no one knows it!
Yet, squeeze him hard, and you will find
There's sweet enough beneath the rhind.

Stiffer than a quarto,
Mustier than a tome;
Drier than a quart o'
What husbands drink at home;

Wiser than a gnome,
Prouder than a Cæsar:
A room he rules at pleasure,
As Cæsar ruled his Rome!

AVE, BERMUDA!

THANKS

FULL of thanks I am to Frith;
Yet, should I once dare to tell him,
As I would tell Jones or Smith,
"Hell!" methinks how he would Hell him!

So I'll leave 'em, fairly written,
On his desk (they'll make a ream!)
For, he is so good a Briton,
When he smiles no one one must see him.

Thus I will begin: "Your Honour," . . .
(Spell it with a "u" to please him)
Ending with "an 'umble son, your . . ."
(Spelt without an "h" to tease him!)

Thro' his window peeps a flower,
To his shutter wings a breeze:
May they utter, every hour,
Thanks—not these!

AVE, BERMUDA!

TO ROSE

O FEAR not, O sigh not,
"To-morrow we part!"
They may wander, but fly not,
Who bear but one heart!

Still, the longer 'tis bent,
The more force has the bow;
And this absence is meant
But for that we should know;

As Cupid well knew,
When his aim he would narrow,
That the longer he drew
The more force had the arrow:

And so long did he draw,
And so good was his aim,
That the wound will be raw
Till quite cold is the game!

Then fear not, O sigh not!
When true lovers part,
They may wander, but fly not,
Who bear the same heart!

AVE, BERMUDA!

THE STREAM OF TIME

WHEN thy head, like a blossom, reposed on my bosom,
And my lips drank the wine that distilled but from thine,
When time seemed a river, whose only endeavour
Was to flow on and go on without caring whither;

Then it seemed that to borrow of care or of sorrow
Was concerning one's self far too much with to-morrow;
So we basked, and we asked not for crowns or for glory,
And the task that we took was but—never to worry!

But time is a stream that belongs to the ocean,
And tho' here we may dream, as it never had motion,
Anon will these dreams be or blasted or broken,
And the rock holds a wreck, or the wave shows a token!

But while yet we can dream, ere a rock is in view,
It is certainly the wisest of things we can do.—
But awake! my beloved, there's an end to our rest,
For the rocks are in view, and the sun's in the west!

But those hearts, that have dreamed on that river together,
Have tasted its blisses, will not fear for its fall;
But closer, and closer, as they bent for those kisses,
Will they take it, nor shake at, the end—if that's all!

AVE, BERMUDA!

IN LOVE'S DEFENSE

O THINK not, O say not, that Love's but a Dream,
That spreads its bright pinions, yet spreads but to fly;
That, in truth, we should know, did we rightfully deem,
That, as snow to the water, it comes but to die!

Tho' true, that his rosy young wings he will lose,
As the butterfly does, in the heart to repose;
But he can never die, while a leaf in it grows,
And there's silk in his bed when the butterfly goes!

Then, O say not that Love is a Fancy, a Thing,
That but flits round the roses of thought for the dew;
As the humming-bird does without resting a wing,
When you point your wise finger—to point where it flew!

Like that music the sages devised for the stars,
Never heard but by ear that the flesh never mars,
Lives the music of love in that shell of the heart:
To thy heart lift it up—and that music will start!

Then O think not, O say not &c.

AVE, BERMUDA!

O THINK NOT FOR THIS

O THINK not for this, that my brows are oft lowering,
My heart never throbs to the wild notes of joy;
Tho' the worm lodged beneath would be ever devouring,
Even he—even he—cannot always annoy!

When I stray by the shore, with the breakers before me,
When I pause 'neath a sky such as this—such as this!
When I glance on such eyes as are now beaming o'er me,
This is bliss, then I say—this is bliss!

Tho' the happy, the lucky, have never felt sorrow,
Such as darkened the brow which you chanced to glance over,
Who, ne'er sighing to-day, never sighed for to-morrow,
It is he,—it is he—that I own may discover,

In the waste of the sands much more than can I;
Still enough, while is left me these strings to explore,
For a space—for a space—then backward to fly
To the wild shore again—let it roar, let it roar!

Let him sip, let him sip—it's for him, it's for him!
But, tho' Love fill it up, let him sigh, let him sigh,
He may lose in the dregs what he found at the brim!
Then back to the breakers, with me, let him fly!

AVE, BERMUDA!

SONG OF THE EXILES

"TAKE a lute and round it
Yew and ivy twine!
And when thus you've bound it
Up to me resign!

From my breast I'll string it,
And each cord shall be,
And each note they bring it,
One of memory!"

Thus when Valor leaves his
One loved shore,
Whate'er sod receives his
Footstep sore,

Oft, from all retiring,
On some wild dark eve,
Save like hearts desiring
With his own to grieve:

AVE, BERMUDA!

If e'er custom skilled him
To explore such strings,
When fond memory's thrilled him,
May be thus he sings:

"Take a lute and round it!
. *&c."*

Or again, despising
All the skill he has,
With the tempest rising,
Thus he says:

"Wreck and ruin on the waves
Wreck and ruin on each hand!
Roar it, ocean, to thy caves!
Shriek it, cavern, to thy strand!

Tear the ivy from it, tear it!
Tear the yew, each string;
Deeper than e'er plummet, bear it,
In the ocean fling!"

Else, the wild mood melted,
 He will take that lute,
Repair the harm he delt it,
 Sing—or be mute:

"Here the weary wanderers came,
 Thus the weary wanderers pined;
 Leaving all they loved behind,
Losing all—but deathless fame!"

Roll it, ocean, to each cave,
 Speak it, caverns, to the strand,
A paean to the exiled brave,—
 Without a land!

AVE, BERMUDA!

THE DEAD SHIP

IS there no pine, in all the high-topped woods,
Will his green state resign,
To sear and shiver 'neath the stars?
Is there no fleecy field
Will canvas yield,
If forest mast and spars,
And give her to the floods again?
And let her find a grave,
Even when she did brave
The storms of all the main!

Else from the shore blow, Tempest, such a gust
As drove her in;
And, when she founders,
Curl all thy billows to a smile,
Old Ocean!

AVE, BERMUDA!

LINES WRITTEN IN ST. GEORGE'S CHANNEL

HERE of old winged Somers in,
Here as well did Moore depart,
Leaving Nea fame to win—
Somers leaves, but not his heart!

Here to-day doth Dargan drift:
Who shall say what he shall find?
A brow for laurels not designed,
A heart as cold as Somers left!

So but like Somers he may fall,
The laurels—spare them, stubborn Fate!
All save the sea-weed, and the call
He loved—old Ocean at the gate!

AVE, BERMUDA!

ON "ABBOTSFORD"

HERE Glory for a brief space smiled,
Having once a votary here beguiled:
Anon she goes, and leaves
Broken wall and eaves,—
A moral and a wild.

TO ON SAYING FAREWELL

DID you know my heart was breaking,
When I aped at cold leave-taking—
Did you know?

Did you guess how much it cost me,
When a light kiss back I tossed thee—
Did you?—Yes!

And you knew it? and you let me?
And you think that you'll forget me?—
Can you do it?

AVE, BERMUDA!

LINES SUGGESTED ON VIEWING A RUINED WALL

WHO has not seen that smile that creeps upon
The tortured lips when they grow cold and wan?
As tho' an Angel, flying o'erhead,
Had downward cast his shadow on the dead!
So Ruin seems akin to Death in this:
To, ofttimes, fairer make what he doth kiss.
Even ills oft turn to goods, when once resigned
To memory—the ruins of the mind;
And Present, turned the Past, we still recall
Wearing a graceful moss, like yonder wall.

AVE, BERMUDA!

TO FITZ-GREENE HALLECK

SON of a cold and barren clime,
 Like flower on the Norway strand,
Flung there to bloom in leaves of rhyme,
 As it in that bleak land!

Stout-hearted and brave son of verse,
 While lessers steal thy bays the while,
I can not even now but curse,—
 Thou did'st but smile!

Yet merit like to thine will live,
 And gather fame from future Days;
While shame, alike for those who give
 And take their praise!

Thy monument is safe: it is
 Thy own fine line, which few can touch:
For one that can, an hundred miss,
 For few are such!

AVE, BERMUDA!

Thy name is, too, of that thin host
 Will reach at last their aim,
While brothers fall at every post—
 Their Rome of fame!

Contented, let the few who love
 Spare scorn, and only seek to be
As far from them, who disapprove
 A man like thee!

AVE, BERMUDA!

MOORE'S FAREWELL TO BERMUDA*

FAERY Isles! blissful Isles!
Lilied land and livid ocean,
Where all Heaven above you smiles
Like a lover in devotion!

Jeweled wave and bowered strand!
Where freed Ariel ever plays,
Having finished each command
Which old Prosper on him lays:

Tho' my canvas wing should bear me
To the furthest shore of all,
And tho' other sights would cheer me,
And tho' other voices call,

Still wherever I be going,
And whatever scenes I view,
As the waves around you flowing,
Will my thoughts encircle you!

AVE, BERMUDA!

Nor a breeze that blows above ye
 But a sigh from me will bring;
For there's naught on earth can move me
 Like yon fluttering canvas wing!

Faery Isles! blissful Isles!
 I must bid you now adieu;
But, by Heaven above you smiles,
 I have left my heart with you!

*It is to be deplored that Moore composed no adieu to Bermuda. I have attempted to supply the deficiency.

AVE, BERMUDA!

"RULE, BRITANNIA!"

I LIKE old England's solid ways,
I hate the days we fought her;
A shilling in my pocket stays
Far longer than a quarter!

Fair ways I much prefer to *square*.
"God save the King!" sounds sweeter;
And, bless my soul! since I am here
I'm turned a roast-beef eater!

I like her style o' doing things—
She never under-does it:
The land o' Democratic Kings—
Not like where we now muss it.

I like—but then 'twere "treason!" yet
I'll say, with Patrick Henry,
In life or death if I forget,—
You'll know I've lost my memory!

AVE, BERMUDA!

I like—these likes are like to bring
 Me into much misliking:
Then for my neck-verse let me sing,
 And, swinging, I'll be striking!

I like the tea-pot—d....n the tea
 They threw in Boston harbour!
I could endure a Jubilee,
 And only hate the barber!

But, tho' no "bark" has Byron seen,
 No "boat" to waft him thither;
As Hamlet says, there's a "machine"
 Stays nor for tide nor weather;

That rhymes must cease; for I must back
 To Jack Frost and "Old Glory":—
Who pulls down yonder Union Jack,
 Pulls down—but that's a story!

One toast: I'll toast it in the ale,
 That patriotic liquor:
Tho' Yankee Doodles on you rail,
 On, England!—we'll not flicker!

AVE, BERMUDA!

Adieu to friends; if any foes,
 The like to them I'd tell:
A lover from your Island goes—
 To one and all, farewell!

AVE, BERMUDA!

NEX TRIUMPHALIS

SPEAK! cannon, from thy rampart high,
No festal note, yet one as loud,
Peace! to the hero in his dank sea-shroud,
Peace! to the mother on the shore,
Peace! to the bride of a moon before,
To all who wait and sigh!

II.

Wake, melancholy harp! where'er a master's hand
Thy numbers can command:
Why so long dumb?
When many a minstrel welters 'neath the foam
Of yon loud sea!
Wake all thy powers, and set thy hushed grief free!

III.

Come, every maid, with flowers, strew them
Where the salt spray will bedew them,
Till decked is every wave,
And music smooths their wide and watery grave!

IV.

But what of him who shrank
When Duty called the true;
And without station, rank,
They answered as men do?

V.

Bell to his rest is sinking,
Phillips, the unshrinking,
Drifts to Lethe fast:
They will "suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange;"
While he will suffer naught,
Unless to Justice brought,
And by her stripes is taught
To feel at last!

VI.

A *Bruce!* could that not turn him
From dastard thoughts of shore?
Then shame can never burn him;
Yet Law at least may teach him,
If justice once but reach him,
What 'twas the brave Bruce wore!

AVE, BERMUDA!

VII.

Land of the brave, our native land!
Is this the soil for him to tread?
Where Custer bled,
Where Stuart led!
By all the living and the dead,
The Gray, the Blue,
The tried and true,
Who always stood, or stand!

VIII.

Proud air that flaunts the unconquered flag!
Is this the air for such as he?
Once breathed by thee,
Intrepid Lee;
That Adams woke, and Liberty
In Henry drew,
And fired those few
Who only feared to lag!

IX.

Where are thy petticoats and gown?
Assume the stoop that saved thee, when,
'Mid manless maid and mateless wife,
Thou sought'st to save that trash—thy life!

AVE, BERMUDA!

Stand not upright like other men!
What! crouch and crawl, as thou didst then!
Why shouldst thou ape a lordlier state
Than he who slipped through Eden's gate—
Thy kindred or thy mate—
Down, to thy fellows, down!

X.

And shall he bask 'neath heaven to-day,
Warmed, cheered by such a glorious ray,
While the sea-damp on *Butt* is freezing,
And cold is *Astor's* bed?
Forgive us, Heaven! but, if our prayers, be pleasing—
A thunder-bolt, instead!

XI.

Rest to the thousand braves who lie below!
All honor to them show!
Let music steal from every eye
A tear, from every breast a sigh,
Each hand a flower throw!
When Beauty weeps o'er Bravery,
Earth doth with Heaven vie!

Let Heaven to Earth reply:
All honor to them and undying fame!
To imitate them only be our aim;
Who died so well deserve that no man blame!

XII.

But one alone of all
That throng for scorn doth call:
Who fell so far since Satan took his fall?
Oh! that his fortune were the same,
And he as low did lie!
"The *Bruce* that led the flight to shame,
While Honor stayed to die!—
Him never name,
Unless to hiss and cry,
The Bruce that led the flight to shame,
While Honor stayed to die!"

XIII.

Speak! England, then thy best;
We'll answer with the rest,
Till the round world shall swell,
O'er land and wave,
The heroes' long farewell—
God save the brave!

AVE, BERMUDA!

XIV.

Speak! trumpets; echo, scarp and moat!
 Peal, cannon, roar on roar!
Answer, ye heavens, high note for note,
 And shore shall answer shore!
All honor to the dauntless braves,
 Who homeward come no more!
Sunk 'neath the tongues of a thousand waves,
 Yet raised on a million score!
 Speak, trumpets, cannon, roar on roar,
 And shore shall answer shore!

XV.

Rest to the thousand braves! and let him—rot!
Remember them, and let him be—forgot!

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